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Agents of Transformation Letter from Rev. Laurie

I invite you to consider what it means to be an agent of transformation. Like the biblical images of salt, light, yeast, or planting and harvesting seed, we are all called to be agents of transformation. All of these have in common a **willingness to be changed** in the process of transformation and a **willingness to help bring change**. Romans 12:2 (NRSV) says:

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

We need to experience transformation in how we think and be willing to "show up" through our physical presence. We know agents of transformation in people who have touched our lives with grace, encouragement, and love.

When I was in grade 3, my teacher asked me to lead the class in reciting a poem in front of the entire school assembly. I was extremely shy and asked if someone could do it with me. The teacher insisted that either I say "yes" or the opportunity would be given to someone else. I decided to say "yes" and learned that poem inside out! My class memorized the poem, and I was the only one entrusted with the paper. But I didn't need it! This was the first step in transforming a very shy child into one that would embrace her own leadership capabilities. My teacher was an agent of my transformation by entrusting me with a leadership role. She changed the way I saw myself, and the seed was planted that perhaps I could be more than I believed I could be.

The Message version puts it this way:

1-2 So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

Who has changed your mind? Who has seen in you something you did not see yourself?

Christian leaders as agents of change embody certain characteristics, which are supported by modern social science research. These characteristics include being a team player, being creative in their actions, showing gratitude to others team members, being concerned for the needs of others, thinking from a global perspective, holding themselves and others accountable for their actions, encouraging team members, being resolute in their decision making and character, speaking the truth in difficult situations, and motivating others to reach for new heights.

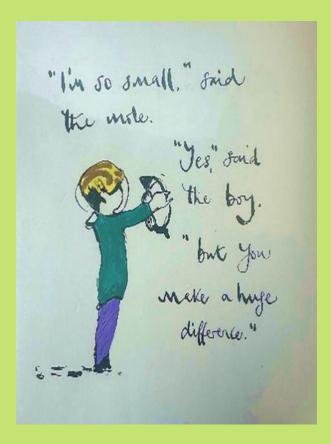
Beloved friends, you are salt, light, yeast or seed and are already making a difference in the world by how you align your life with what is good and acceptable and perfect. I like being around you!

Together in Transformation through Christ,

Laurie

Rev. Laurie McKay

P.S. Here are some pictures of our Staff Retreat where we explored the theme: Agents of Transformation











This fall Session will be participating in a book study "Leading by Story – Rethinking Church Leadership" by Vaughan S. Roberts and David Sims

There is growing excitement about the Indigenous gathering in September – we are grateful for the grants we have received (with potential of more to come)

At least 5 people will be going to Uplift (in the past this was called 'CY'). We will be commissioning Braeden Werle, Kaitlyn Werle, Douglas Henrichsen, Lauren Nolette and Matt Nolette during worship prior to their departure for July's Uplift conference.

Debby Dorcas, Clerk of Session





ELDER PROFILE Loran McVittie

Loran McVittie was born in 1950 in Spirit River, Alberta, but he grew up in nearby Wanham. In those days it was a village of around 500 people, located in farming country about 85 kms northeast of Grande Prairie.

Many of Wanham's inhabitants were veterans of World War II. Although they were perhaps not farmers, they were drawn to the community by a government offer of free land. The small town had a post office, a hotel, and a grocery store, as well as other retail businesses. There was also a school and five or six churches of different denominations.

Loran's mother was of Ukrainian descent, and had been brought up in the Greek Orthodox tradition, while his father was Anglican. The McVitties attended the Presbyterian Church.

Loran's father was a heavy equipment operator and they owned a small farm. Loran's mom was a homemaker, and she took librarian courses and established a library in Wanham. Later on Loran's parents moved to Grande Prairie, and while living there, Loran's mother became an elder at Forbes Presbyterian Church.

Children from the various denominations often attended summer vacation bible camps. A popular activity for the boys was with the Royal Canadian Air Cadets. Every Wednesday the Presbyterian minister drove four to six boys back and forth to Fairview, where they were taught drills and military manners. They learned discipline and earned badges. An added bonus involved flights in the Air Force transport planes. The Air Cadets could also attend summer camps at Penhold, Alberta and Borden, Ontario, where they were given flights in gliders.

While living in Grande Prairie Loran went to the Grande Prairie College and also attended the University of Alberta, graduating with a Pharmacy Degree in 1973. This is also where he met and married Judy Whittle. She was a Certified Nursing Assistant, and off the two of them went to work at the Peace River Hospital. In 1975 they moved to Ottawa to advance their education. They stayed in the Capital for six years, before returning to Grande Prairie.

In 1989 they moved to Calgary. Here they built the house in River Bend, where they still live today. Loran took specialized education and worked at PADIS (Poison and Drug Information Service), which offered a 911 telephone information service advising patients on what to do at home, and then following up with doctors and emergency staff giving further advice on poison treatments.

Soon after arriving in Calgary, Loran and Judy went church shopping, which brought them to St. Andrew's and Rev. Karl English. They quickly felt at home in their new church community and joined the membership.

In 1991 Rev. English asked Loran to become an elder and join Session. He was an active visitor, a responsibility he took seriously and very much enjoyed. He is still an enthusiastic participant in church life, taking a turn serving on numerous committees. Although communion cards and visitation routines are no longer the norm, he keeps up the practice of visiting with long-time church members, who find themselves unable to actively participate in church life and activities, but enjoy it when a friend visits and brings a bit of church life into their homes.

Loran is a great believer in people helping each other, and in the importance of faith in everyday living. These are things he practices daily. "You have to have faith of some kind", he says with a smile.

Submitted by Flemming Nielsen







Nursery:

We hope to have Nursery staff available on Sundays over the summer, and will post a schedule on the Nursery door as the schedule is filled. We are grateful for the staff who provided care for our little ones this year. As church school finishes at the end of June and will not return until September, young children (5 and under) have the option to go to the Nursery during the sermon if they wish.

Church School:

The last day of church school will be on Sunday, June 23rd when we will dismiss school for the summer, and we look forward to seeing everyone back in September. Our end of year church school party was held on Sunday, May 26th during regular church school class (with ice cream sandwiches). A huge thank you to all our teachers and helpers who supported the youngest members of our church with opportunities to see the God moments in their lives.





Our Church School Grads: On Sunday, May 12th we had the opportunity to celebrate our grade 6 and grade 12 grads. Congratulations to the following students for this milestone in your life:

Grade 6 grads:

Grace Travers
Stephen Bridgemohan
Rennie Boehm
Ceana Dhanpaul

Grade 12 grads:

Marcos Aburto Kierra Huthersall





Youth Group:

After another year of fun, our youth group will be wrapping things up for the year with an end of year barbeque on Friday, June 21st in Fish Creek Park. More details will come as the date approaches. All youth group attendees and their parents are welcome to come celebrate the end of the year.

Douglas Henrichsen, Braeden and Kaitlyn Werle, and Lauren and Matt Nolette will be attending the UPLIFT conference in St. Catharines, Ontario at Brock University. The conference will be held from July 3-7, 2024. As a way of getting them, and our congregation excited, the youth group will be conducting another cookie sale on Sunday, June 2nd to support their fundraising efforts. Bring your appetite and support for this initiative!

Submitted by the Faith Formation Team





Facilities Update

Over the past several months your Facilities team has been busy. We want to inform you about a few recent and upcoming building improvements planned for this Spring and Summer.

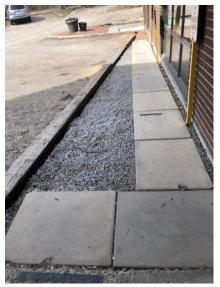
New Refrigerator in the Karl English Lounge Kitchenette

Given the number of groups using the Lounge, it was identified that there was a need for a larger refrigerator to replace the bar fridge in use. The Ladies Guild generously offered to purchase a new refrigerator provided Facilities team could find a place in which to install it. Facilities volunteers met and created a cut out in the wall of the kitchenette by using some of the adjacent storage closet. They did a first-class job and the new fridge was operational effective mid April.



Installation of Motion Sensor Light Switches in Lounge Washrooms

In an effort to reduce electricity costs, on April 30 th Facilities team installed motion sensor light timer switches in both washrooms in the Karl English Lounge. The washroom lights are now programmed to come on automatically when a person enters and the lights are set to remain on for 20 minutes from the time the sensor last detects movement, following which the lights go out. We hope that this will eliminate occurrences where lights have been left on all night. Just a reminder that you do not need to turn the light switch on or off when entering or exiting the washroom as the sensor will do so automatically. If the trial installation works well, we plan to install sensor light switches elsewhere in the building.



New Sidewalk along south side of Lounge building

St. Andrew's has now contracted a local company to install a new paved sidewalk along the south side of the Karl English Lounge building. The sidewalk, which will run from the existing sidewalk by the back door to the concrete pad by the Nursery exit door, will replace the paving stones which are in poor condition. We will also be replacing the wooden ties with proper concrete wheel stops. It is our hope that this improvement will make it easier for persons using the handicapped parking spots to access the building. This project is scheduled to be completed by end of July.

Painting Updates

Our building which we are proud to use for worship, for meetings, and to host community groups requires regular and on-going sprucing-up to keep it looking its best. St. Andrew's has contracted a local painting company to repaint the walls, ceilings, and handrails in the main stairwell (off the foyer), the south-west stairwell by the back door, and the north-west stairwell near the Nursery. The work is expected to be finished by the end of July.

This winter all three ministers' offices were repainted. It is our plan to repaint the Karl English Lounge and Inner Hall this Spring, as part of a schedule to brighten up other rooms around the building. This work will be accomplished by congregational volunteers. Please consider helping us repaint the Lounge and Inner Hall this year by giving us a few hours of your time. Watch for the announcements. Thanks.

Submitted by Don Koch, Facilities Team Convenor





St. Andrew's continues to expand how we express our Mission Statement: "Woven into the neighbourhood, growing disciples who love like Jesus." One upcoming way we are doing this will be by hosting an Indigenous Friendship Day on September 28th! Planning is already well underway to welcome 700 – 1,000 people where they will have the opportunity to learn more about indigenous culture. The day's experiences will include: a TiPi raising, crafts, indigenous games, story-telling, a drumming experience, a free indigenous meal and sharing in a circle dance.

This is indeed a move "into the neighbourhood" as we will be inviting the residents of Haysboro and Kingsland to attend. We also desire to create a moment that builds bridges between the indigenous and non-indigenous people who live around us. Did you know that Haysboro and Kingsland are the homes for about 500 indigenous persons? Greater mutual understanding and appreciation can lead to stronger ties in the community and more neighbourly support one to another. So we hope the day will not only be fun and educational, but also an opportunity to build community strength.

Now, we know that's a big crowd! This is certainly not something St. Andrew's can do on its own. The Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary is our partner. We have already been working with the Kingsland Community Association who will help us promote the event and also put out the word for volunteer help. Additionally, we will seek the involvement of 11 congregations in the neighbourhood...many of whom are a part of denominations that once had residential schools. We are also being helped by governments. Already the Province of Alberta and the City of Calgary have provided grants to help fund the event, that are added to the grants we've received from The Presbyterian Church in Canada and our own Legacy Fund. Our goal is to cover the cost of hosting this event--\$32,000—all by grants. Oh, and the City of Calgary is also supporting this event by letting us use the far end of the old YMCA lot for free, so some of the activities can take place there.

So, yeah, that is a big crowd! You will hear more about how you can help out as the day approaches. But if you want to help us now with the initial planning, just reach out to me any time. Submitted by Rev. Peter Coutts (peter@coutts.name)

Trinity History Bites

Part 1 of a New Series

Over 20 years ago, the mission oriented focus of St. Andrew's was directed to the growing south part of Calgary. Many will not know of the approach our church took in what led to the formation of Trinity Presbyterian in January of 1988. The following article appeared in the December 1986 edition of "Mission Update", a publication of the Board of World Mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It was written by Rev. Marty J. Molengraaf, who was Minister of our St. Andrew's "satellite" from August 1983 to October, 1986. Future articles is this series will continue to explore exciting aspects of this continuing adventure.





The cry of attempting to make church extension work - "There are not enough people; There isn't enough money to support the extension; There are no programs; There is no Management".

There is a better way ... and it is by satellite. St. Andrew's on Heritage Drive in Calgary was interested in seeing establishment of another church in the Southeast of the city ... some ten kilometres away. The area, known as "Midnapore" was and is, a growing community with very few established churches in the area.



The satellite concept is simple ... and important. Under its precept, there is one congregation, one Session, one Board of Managers, one staff, one resource base, and one Treasury. There are two Ministers, one who is fully involved in the life of the home church, but with participation in the project, and one who has prime responsibility for the extension project and is involved with the home church. Sunday School and adult programs are in place so that when a family or individual comes to the Midnapore location, they have access to all.



Rented facilities at Midnapore

From the very beginning it was important that St. Andrew's, Heritage Drive, support St. Andrew's in Midnapore. And some thirty-five Heritage Drive people made sure there was a congregation on Sunday mornings. Today, there are forty-seven families who are part of the life of St. Andrew's in Midnapore, and a Sunday School in place with thirty active children. There are adult programs and choirs and the like operative solely in Midnapore. St. Andrew's has elected four elders who normally worship in Midnapore to represent their interests at Session. In addition, there is a Board of Managers Committee charged with specific responsibilities for Midnapore.

There will be a need soon for St. Andrew's congregation to face building a permanent facility to house the growing Midnapore family. And it will be a project undertaken with the love of the whole of St. Andrew's on behalf of Midnapore.

From the outset this extension project has worked. It never had the appearance of failure or question because a mature church grew out of itself. By satellite ... the way to go.

The Rev. Marty J. Molengraaf was minister in the Midnapore congregation from Aug. 1, 1983 to Oct., 1986.



My childhood and teenage years were spent in beautiful Cape Breton Island, where we enjoyed lovely summer days swimming in Bras D'or Lake, and dipping our toes in the ocean of Ingonish Beach. Some of my fondest memories are Sunday School picnics at Grove's Point and learning to swim in the Mira river at church camp.

Sunscreen and wide brimmed hats were not the norm, and I (like many others) am required to deal with the consequences. Dermatology appointments and wait lists are on the rise not only for cosmetic purposes.

The dermatology experts tell us there is one thing we should never skip before heading out for the day.... sunscreen... regardless of the weather forecast. Also they advise reapplication frequently, especially during prolonged sun exposure. Long sleeves and wide brimmed hats limit the amount of sunscreen applications. Year round we need protection from the sun's powerful UV rays minimizing the risk of painful sunburns, skin cancer and even premature signs of aging such as dark spots and wrinkles.

The two main types of sunscreens are physical (mineral) and chemical. There are pro and cons for both.

Chemical sunscreens act like a sponge absorbing UV rays and converting them to heat, which is then released from the skin. In most cases chemical sunscreens provide more protection, especially for those with excessive sweating or those who spend a lot of time in the water. They usually absorb quickly. The active ingredients in chemical blocks are avobenzone, octinoxate, and oxybenzone.

A physical sunscreen acts like a shield deflecting and/or scattering UV rays, and once applied sits on the surface of the skin. Titanium dioxide and zinc oxide are the main active ingredients in physical blocks. They tend to be less irritating. (Good for individuals with sensitive skin.) They are more moisturizing which can feel heavy. However, some brands offer matte and tinted versions which can give a smooth, even appearance.

Whether you choose physical (mineral) or chemical, things to look for are:

Broad spectrum (protects from both UVA and UVB rays) Non non-comedogenic (won't clog pores) Oil free Paraben (preservative) free SPF 50.

Dr. F. Jafarian who is my dermatologist says she and her colleagues recommend a mineral sunscreen with SPF 50. We should be cognizant of any change in shape or size of moles. Asking a partner or health care provider to check areas of your body such as your back periodically is also a good preventative measure.

Submitted by Barbara Kearnes

The psalmist, possibly Hezekiah, recognized our need for protection:





As a result of the work of the SAFE – Sexuality and Faith Explored Team in 2022, Session adopted recommendations that St. Andrew's is "an affirming congregation who publicly, intentionally, and explicitly welcomes LGBTIQ2S+ persons to full participation in the life of our community."

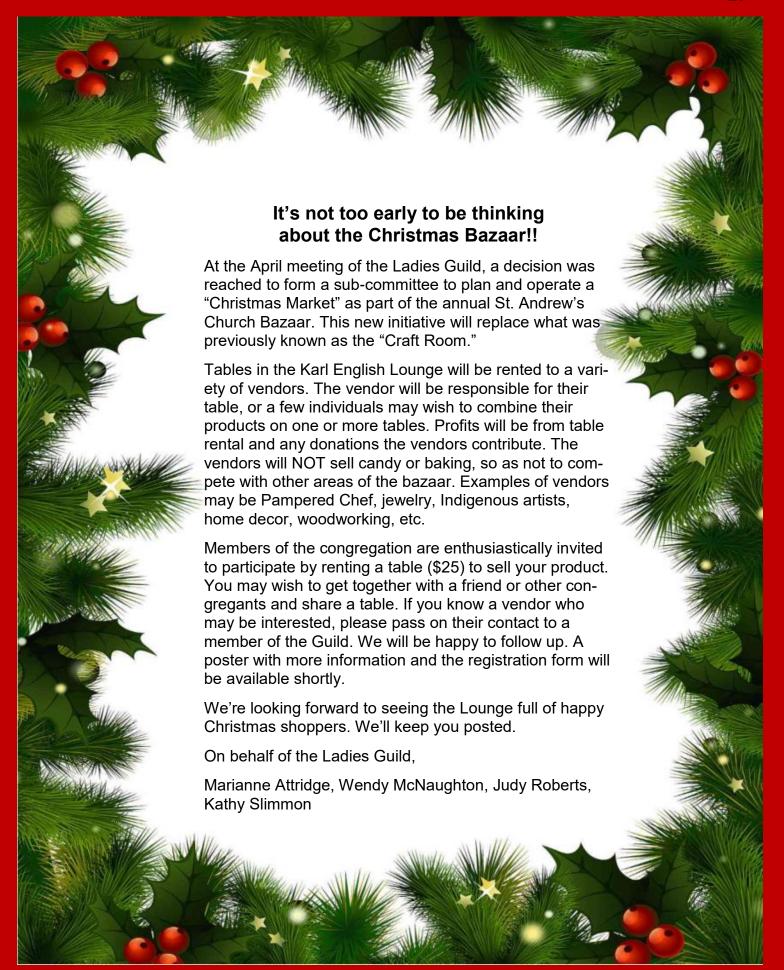
Session also agreed to "commit to carrying the work of diversity and inclusion forward in an intentional way, e.g. continuing education with the congregation, partner with churches on this path; create a team or partner with Leading with Care to develop goals and monitor progress."

The above commitments are being reviewed and actioned through the recently formed Rainbow Team. Members are Stephanie Werle, Rhonda Wishart, Derek Wilkinson, Lynn Judd, Rev. Laurie McKay, Lauren Cole, Cathy Millar and Linda Johnson.

Our work to date has included gathering information and resources relative to providing a welcoming and inclusive space for members of the Rainbow community. We are brainstorming what actions and timeline are most appropriate to be meaningful for our congregation. We are reviewing how worship content, communications tools, church activities and signage can or should be altered to reflect the affirming approach of this congregation.

Our guiding principles are to be sincere and thoughtful with our initiatives, and to respect that each person is at a different place on the inclusion journey. All actions we take will be cloaked in a warm, welcoming approach.







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We welcome articles to be submitted on or before July 15, 2024, to:

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